



Forest Service

Kaibab National Forest
800 S. 6th St.
Williams, AZ 86046
(928) 635-8200
www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab

News Release

Media Contacts: Loretta Benavidez
loretta_benavidez@firenet.gov

Castle Fire Information Center:
(928) 643-8152, (928) 643-8158

Castle Fire nearly doubles in size under favorable conditions

FREDONIA, Ariz., July 26, 2019 — Firefighters have made excellent progress in reinforcing the 19,632-acre planning area perimeter of the Castle Fire. If weather conditions remain favorable today, a helicopter will be utilized to conduct aerial ignitions along the interior edges of the already burned areas. This will help strengthen the control lines to minimize any potential of the fire burning outside of the planning area.

The fire is slowly backing through dead and down trees and grass. Area thunderstorms have not materialized over the fire area and have had minimal effects on the Castle Fire. This wildfire continues to play a vital role in functioning as a natural disturbance within the mixed-conifer ecosystem by reducing excessive fuel (vegetation) accumulations that currently exist across the forest floor.

The lightning-caused wildfire was detected on July 12th and has grown to 1,700 acres. The Castle Fire is located about 11 miles south of Jacob Lake, 3 miles west of Highway 67, and just east of Forest Road 761 near Oquer Canyon.

Yesterday, under favorable weather conditions, the fire backed its way downslope into receptive fuel beds, resulting in good consumption of available vegetation. As a result, the fire grew more than 700 acres. While firing operations are being used mostly along the eastern edge of the planning area, equipment, including masticators and bulldozers, continue prep work around the southern and northern perimeter.

Fire managers expect the Castle Fire to remain active, even with the possibility of precipitation, as predicted over the next few days. The long-term forecast calls for dry weather to follow, likely causing the fire to regain momentum and continue to gradually spread throughout the planning area of 19,632 acres.

As an added safety measure for both public and firefighters, a temporary Closure Order is now in effect for the Castle Fire area: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>

The Castle Fire poses no danger to structures or other local infrastructure.





CASTLE FIRE OVERVIEW

- **Discovery Date:** July 12, 2019.
- **Cause:** Lightning.
- **Location:** Approximately 11 miles south of Jacob Lake, 3 miles west of Highway 67, and just east of Forest Road 761 near Oquer Canyon on the North Kaibab Ranger District of the Kaibab National Forest.
- **Current Resources:** Three crews, eight engines, a helicopter, a dozer, a chipper, two water tenders, four masticators, and miscellaneous fire management personnel. Total personnel: approximately 171.
- **Current Size:** About 1,700 acres within a 19,632-acre planning area.
- **Predicted Smoke Impacts:** Smoke is expected to be visible from both the north and south rims of Grand Canyon National Park, Jacob Lake, Highway 67, Highway 89A, and Fredonia.
- **Current Closures:** Kaibab National Forest managers have implemented a temporary Closure Order for the Castle Fire area in order to provide for public and firefighter safety. For specific information about the Closure Order, please visit: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>
- **Recent and Current Operations:** Wildland fire crews plan to continue improving roads and other designated perimeters within which the fire can move. Current weather conditions may influence the use of firing operations which may be conducted as needed in order to strengthen control lines.

Kaibab National Forest information is available through the following sources:

- Castle Fire Inciweb Page: <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov/incident/6439/>
- Kaibab National Forest Website: www.fs.usda.gov/kaibab
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/KaibabNF
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/KaibabNF
- Flickr: <http://bit.ly/CastleFire2019>

###

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

